

Case 2690

***Helophorus brevipalpis* Bedel, 1881 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed precedence over *Helophorus creticus* Kiesenwetter, 1858**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to give precedence to the name *Helophorus brevipalpis* Bedel, 1881 for one of the commonest water beetles in Europe, known also from the Pleistocene, over the senior subjective synonym *Helophorus creticus* Kiesenwetter, 1858.

1. Kiesenwetter (1858, p. 40) described a water beetle *Helophorus creticus* in Kraatz's work on the Coleoptera of Greece.

2. Bedel (1881, p. 301), in his key to the *Helophorus* species occurring in the Seine basin, described *Helophorus brevipalpis*, a name currently used for one of the commonest water beetles in Europe.

3. Knisch (1924, p. 79) listed four references to *H. creticus*, the most recent being 1919. He placed *H. creticus* as a subspecies of *brevipalpis*, rather than *brevipalpis* as a subspecies of *creticus*, presumably in deference to the wide use of the name *brevipalpis*. I know of no subsequent use of *H. creticus* as the valid name of a beetle.

4. A. d'Orchymont (1927, p. 232) placed *H. brevipalpis* as a subspecies of *H. guttulus* Motschulsky, 1860. Zaitzev (1946, p. 255) showed that this was a misidentification of *H. guttulus*, and that the species regarded by d'Orchymont as *H. guttulus* was *H. montenegrinus* Kuwert, 1885.

5. Smetana (1985, p. 59) listed a number of synonyms of *H. brevipalpis*, but stated that he had not studied the original material of these synonyms and had simply accepted the synonymy established by previous authors. Three of these synonyms predate the establishment of *H. brevipalpis* and are recorded by Smetana thus:

Helophorus aquaticus Duftschmid, 1805 (ex parte, nec Linné, 1758)

Helophorus gramaris C. G. Thomson, 1853 (nec Linné, 1761)

Helophorus griseus Seidlitz, 1872 (nec Herbst, 1793).

These three names are not junior homonyms of the names by Linnaeus or Herbst, but misidentifications of those names. As such they do not affect the priority of *H. brevipalpis*.

6. Angus (1985, p. 722) designated lectotypes for *H. brevipalpis* and *H. creticus*, and showed that they refer to the same species. Angus (1988, p. 216) analysed regional variations shown by *H. brevipalpis*. He showed that, while material from Lebanon, south eastern Anatolia (Turkey) and eastern Iran appeared to represent a distinct subspecies, variation between European populations was too slight to justify the recognition of further subspecies. He further showed (Angus, 1988, p. 226) that the types of

both *H. brevipalpis* and *H. creticus* belong to populations which resemble one another within the spectrum of variation shown by European material.

7. It is thus clear that *H. brevipalpis* and *H. creticus* refer to the same very distinct species and, indeed, to the same infra-specific form of that species. The name *H. brevipalpis* has been used as a valid name in numerous systematic and ecological works, and also in studies of Pleistocene fossils, such as Balfour-Browne (1958, p. 115), Bellstedt & Fichtner (1985, p. 254) and Coope (1979, p. 256); a list of 7 other papers is held by the Secretariat. As stated in para. 3 above, I am unaware of the use of the name *H. creticus* for a valid species since 1924. A change of name from *brevipalpis* to the unused *creticus* would cause confusion and would not be in the interests of stability of nomenclature. However, it is possible that subsequent workers, particularly those using cytological or biochemical techniques, may demonstrate the existence of more than one taxon. For this reason it would not be appropriate to suppress the name *creticus* outright as it may eventually prove to represent a taxon distinct from *brevipalpis*.

8. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to rule that the specific name *brevipalpis* Bedel, 1881, as published in the binomen *Helophorus brevipalpis*, is to be given precedence over the specific name *creticus* Kiesenwetter, 1858, as published in the binomen *Helophorus creticus*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *brevipalpis* Bedel, 1881, as published in the binomen *Helophorus brevipalpis*, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over *creticus* Kiesenwetter, 1858, as published in the binomen *Helophorus creticus*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
 - (b) *creticus* Kiesenwetter, 1858, as published in the binomen *Helophorus creticus*, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over *brevipalpis* Bedel, 1881, as published in the binomen *Helophorus brevipalpis*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms.

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